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History of New York Shipyards. By JOHN H. MORRISON. (New York: William F. Sametz and Company, 1909. Pp. 165. \$2.)

The author of the *History of American Steam Navigation* has here gathered together a mass of detailed and somewhat miscellaneous information largely of local interest relative to shipbuilding at New York City. This industry did not get fully under way in this section until the removal of Fulton's monopoly in 1824, and it ended in 1865 with the passing of the wooden steamship. Within these years, many vessels were turned out from New York shipyards, including the famous clippers. The decline of shipbuilding is mainly attributed to a failure on the part of builders to realize that iron was to replace wood as the material of construction. The reader fails to find any reference to the effect of our protective policy, and must be content with a denunciation of Congress for withdrawing the subsidy to the Collins Line.

There is a description of the agitation of employees resulting in 1834 in the establishment of shorter hours, which according to the author was the first successful agitation for a ten-hour day carried on by a trade organization of mechanics in this country, a statement the correctness of which the reviewer is inclined to doubt. Assertions that Robert Fulton lacked a knowledge of naval architecture, and that no designs of the Clermont have ever been found, would seem to show that the author is not familiar with Mrs. Sutcliffe's recent work on *Robert Fulton and the Clermont*.

F. H. D.

The Safety of British Railways, or Railway Accidents: How Caused and How Prevented. By H. RAYNAR WILSON. (London: P. S. King & Son, 1909. Pp. vii, 240. 3s. 6d.)

Britain's remarkable record for 1908, in which no death occurred from a train accident, leads one to pick up this book with anticipation. But the reader must expect to be disappointed. It is written apparently by an engineer who is largely interested in the technical features. It is at times badly expressed, and it is loosely and illogically thrown together. The author's main thesis is a comparison of conditions on the railways in 1874 as recorded by

the Royal Commission of that year, with conditions now. From this comparison he shows that railways have voluntarily adopted all the modern safety devices and that the only significant legislation of the period, that of 1889, which gave the Board of Trade power to compel the introduction of appliances, was by that time superfluous for the majority of roads. His conclusion is that while in 1874 accidents were largely due to defects in mechanism, at the present time such accidents as occur are the result of human frailty.

F. H. D.

Robert Fulton and the "Clermont." By ALICE CRARY SUTCLIFFE.
(New York: The Century Company, 1909. Pp. xv, 367.
\$1.20 net.)

Prepared for the Hudson-Fulton celebration by the great-granddaughter of the inventor, this volume, while adding little to our knowledge of Fulton's life and achievements, brings together a valuable collection of portraits, letters, plans and sketches, many of which have never before been published. These documents establish beyond question Fulton's claim to credit as the inventor or the successful perfecter of the steamboat, for while he generously acknowledged indebtedness to his predecessors who attempted a solution of the problem, nevertheless it is clear that he had hit upon the right idea so long before he produced his finished boat as to dispose altogether of the claims of those who charge Fulton with misappropriation of their designs.

Fulton's genius was by no means exhausted in the production of the steamboat. He constructed a large number of machines for industrial use. Moreover, his efforts to demonstrate the value of the submarine torpedo, and his writings in behalf of canal development are striking instances of the breadth of his interests and the sanity of his visions. Through all his writings there breathes a fervent spirit of patriotism and a longing for universal peace and intellectual freedom. He was a painter of no mean ability and a list of his paintings is included in the appendix. Those interested in industrial history will note the omission from the list of the portrait of Edmund Cartwright, the inventor of the powerloom.

F. H. D.